

Washington, DC – Today, Congressman Charles A. Gonzalez (TX-20) voted to bring common sense reform and consumer protections to our financial system. The Credit Cardholders' Bill of Rights will end the unfair practices of the credit card industry and protect consumers from the abusive tactics that continue to drive so many Americans deeper and deeper into debt. Congressman Gonzalez applauded the passage of the legislation, saying:

“This bill helps curb unfair credit card lending practices that trap consumers. Credit card debt has become a significantly mounting problem throughout the nation. Everywhere you look-- family, friends and coworkers are all facing excessive fees, interest rate hikes and unfair, incomprehensible agreements that are altered without notice. Today, under the Credit Cardholders' Bill of Rights, my colleagues and I voted to put an end to these abusive practices.”

The bill levels the playing field between card issuers and cardholders by applying common sense regulations that would ban most retroactive interest rate hikes on existing balances, double-cycle billing and due-date gimmicks.

“The people of San Antonio deserve fair treatment from their credit card companies,” explained Congressman Gonzalez. “It is our right to be informed and hold credit card companies accountable for their manipulative policies. This bill helps put the everyday consumer back in control of their finances and gets our economy back on track.”

Specifically, the bill protects cardholders against arbitrary interest rate increases, empowers them to set limits on their credit and requires card companies to fairly credit and allocate payments. It also prohibits charging fees just to pay a bill by phone, charging over-the-limit fees unless a consumer opts-in in advance or issuing credits cards to minors.

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